Relationships and Attaining “One Flesh” (by Jim Myers) August 2024

I have endeavored to work the scriptures to gain a greater understanding of my responsibility in a marriage relationship according to God’s Word. This endeavor has lead me on a journey to better understand my personal walk with my Heavenly Father. This study of the scriptures makes it abundantly clear to me, that we are first and foremost individual children to God. We must look at ourselves as the ones responsible for our walk with our Heavenly Father. Yes, we can allow others to influence our walks, but we must always filter and weigh that influence through the lens of God’s Word. As the saying goes, “The road of life is paved with good intentions”. But good intentions are not necessarily a basis to live by. They can be profitable when lined up with God’s Word. Many folks are well meaning and have good intentions to help or guide us. The heart behind these well meaning folks is a genuine desire to be a help. Sharing personal experiences can be wonderful insights to how God has worked in someone’s life to bring deliverance. We have absolutely no control over any other human being. We can indeed have an influence and attempt to nurture folks, but we cannot control their thinking, behavior or attitude. There has to be a willingness as an individual in God’s household to self-reflect, to take an honest appraisal of our actions, attitude and behavior. To assess ourselves according to the scriptures. If you look at this assessment honestly and answer, “well, I do not see any area where I am not lined up with God’s Word”. You have already defeated the promises of God’s Word.

Romans 12:3 For I say to every man that is among you, through the grace given unto me, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Soberly (sober minded) – (Greek) sophronein, sound judgment, to be sensible, to be self controlled.

Highly (high minded) – (Greek) hypersophronein (used only once)

If we cannot see any room for improvement we are deceiving ourselves. (dishonest)

James 1:21-24

Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls. But be

ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: For he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was.

The word *deceiving* is the Greek word – paralogizomenoi (used only once) means, deceiving, deluding. Root word is paralogizomai – to miscalculate, to reason falsely.

It's never a bad idea to seek wise counsel from others in the household of God, especially leadership. The counsel of the Lord will be profitable if you can accept and trust their judgement. **Romans 13:1-5** Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers (leadership within God's household). For there is no power but of God; the powers that be (leadership in God's household) are ordained of God. Whosever therefore resists the power, resists the ordinance of God; and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation (judgement). For the rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid (respectful, in reverence) of the power? I believe the scriptures and trust that God has placed the members of the body as it has pleased him, which includes those ordained into his service. **I Corinthians 12:27** We are members in particular. We each have our calling and a responsibility to learn what our calling is and endeavor to fulfill that calling.

Psalm 33:10,11 The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought (profitless) he maketh the devices of the people of none effect (profitless) (Devices of the people are basically anything man can think of that is at cross purposes with God's will.) **11.** The counsel of the Lord stands forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations.

Forever is a very long time!

In a marriage relationship there are two individuals with different backgrounds, different upbringing and unique perspectives. Those two individuals are solely responsible for their own individual walks with their Heavenly Father.

If we find ourselves blaming our spouse for marital woes, we have the responsibility to take a look at ourselves first. Our actions, reactions, behavior and responses will play a key role in how our spouses see us. God's word tells us in

Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus for good works which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

It is imperative that we see each other in God's household as God sees us.

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus (in fellowship with God), who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit.

This brings into this study, the possibility that one can walk after the flesh. What is "walking after the flesh?" Walking after the flesh is to be carnally minded.

Romans 8:6-17 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. **7**. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. **8.** So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. **9**. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be that the spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his. **10**. And if Christ in you, the body is dead because of sin: but the spirit is life, because of righteousness. **11.** But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you: he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his spirit that dwelleth in you. **12.** Therefore, brethren , we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. **13**. For if you live after the flesh you shall die: but if you through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, you shall live. **14**. For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God. **15**. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father. **16**. The spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God: **17.** And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.

It is important that we see each believer as God sees each believer.

This brings us to the topic of our old man nature.

Romans 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him (Jesus Christ), that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

Our “old man” is basically the knowledge and information we have received through our five senses that does not align with God’s word.

Romans 6:7-12 For he that is dead is freed from sin. **8**. Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. **9**. Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no dominion over him. **10**. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth into God. **11**. Likewise reckon you also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. How do we “reckon our old man dead”?

We must recognize the parts of our thinking that do not align with God’s word. Once we recognize where our thinking is not lined up, we have the opportunity to renew our minds to the Word of God.

Colossians 3:9,10 Lie not one to another, seeing that you have put off the old man with his deeds.

II Corinthians 4:16 For which cause we faint not; but through our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day

Romans 12:1,2 I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice , holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. **2.** And be not conformed to this world (carnally minded): but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

God has made it available to change our thinking by renewing our minds. This does not just happen when we get born-again. Yes, we have the spirit of God dwelling within, we have Christ in us the hope of glory. But, we must take inventory of our thinking and remove those things that are contrary to God’s word and replace them with God’s word. It is a different process for everyone. One must have complete trust in God and his word to accomplish this process. This process occurs in our minds where the spiritual contest takes place. Our old man nature can get in the way of Godly thinking. It can muddy the waters of our relationships. Our old man nature is ours to reckon dead, no one else can do it for us.

Ephesians 4:22-32 That you put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that you put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore putting

away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. Be ye angry and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: neither give place to the devil. Let him that stole, steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying , that it may minister grace unto the hearers. And grieve not the holy spirit of God, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another tenderhearted forgiving one another even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

The word malice in verse 31 is interesting. The Greek word is *"kakia"* which means: wickedness, vice, malice, badness, naughtiness, spite. So in essence God is instructing us in verse 31 to put away all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and evil speaking (with all malice) could be stated as: also, along with all those things put away wickedness, vice, malice, bitterness, naughtiness and spite. This covers everything contrary to God's word.

A marriage will have difficulty thriving if the husband or wife cannot reckon their old man dead. God's plan for marriage was not to go out and get conformed to this world and it's ideas of what marriage is or should be.

Let's explore the beginning of the marital relationship in Genesis.

Genesis 2:7,8 And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. **8** And the Lord God planted a garden Eastward in Eden; and there he put the man whom he had formed.

So God placed Adam in the garden to take care of it, to dress it and keep it. So this garden would have supplied Adam with everything he would have needed to live the best life he could possibly have, physically. God would have left nothing out, it would have been perfect, nothing lacking. Adam would have been a perfect physical specimen and that garden would have given him all he needed to maintain him physically.

In verse 16 God commanded Adam saying, of <u>every</u> tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat. God had to make this statement because Adam had freedom of will and could have eaten of <u>every</u> tree, as God stated. The

Hebrew word for every is *“kol”* and means: all, every, whole, entire, total. Which means the entire garden.

In verse 17 We see God commanding Adam about the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die. So God expressly forbids Adam from eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and also gives Adam the consequences if he chooses to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Shalt not eat of it, is a commandment from God. Shalt surely die is an absolute consequence of disobeying God’s commandment.

Verse 18 And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone: I will make him an help meet for him.

Adam had everything he needed in the garden to live physically. God knew that Adam would not thrive alone and would not be able to replenish the Earth by himself. God put the emphasis on Adam’s loneliness rather than on his eventual duty to replenish the Earth.

It’s interesting that God then begins creating every beast of the field and every foul of the air and brought them unto Adam to name them in verse 19. During this period Adam would have been aware of each animal being in pairs, male and female. We don’t have any idea what was going through Adam’s mind while he was naming all the animals. He could have been thinking, “Hmm, he wants me to name all these animals and there is a male and female of every species, but why don’t I have a female”? We just don’t know, but being a guy, I could easily see this question coming to my mind.

Verse 21 And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept; and he took one of his ribs and closed up the flesh in stead thereof.

Verse 22 And the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.

Verse 23 And Adam said, this is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man.

We know that God has never made a mistake, and it is quite literally impossible for God to mess up in any way. Right? Well don’t you think that this woman would have been a perfect specimen? She would have been literally the most beautiful woman on Earth! Of course, she’s the only one.

We have no idea how Adam would have responded to seeing her, it isn't recorded. But we can imagine that Adam was struck by her beauty and everything about her.

We as men can identify with Adam when we encounter a beautiful woman and all her attributes. At times we can become speechless and dumbfounded during an encounter with a beautiful woman. What is fascinating is that the beauty of a woman is subjective to the eyes of the beholder. The things I find attractive in a woman could be completely different for another man. It reminds me of that cliché', "variety is the spice of life".

Verse 24 Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

God sees the marriage as one flesh. Spiritually, this is how God sees the marriage. The first part is we shall cleave unto our wives. The Hebrew verb *dabaq* primarily means to cling or adhere closely to something or someone. It conveys a sense of loyalty, attachment, or steadfastness. In the context of relationships it often implies a deep, committed bond, such as that between husband and wife. (Berean Strong's Lexicon G2853 G4347) It is up to us as individuals in that marriage to accomplish this notion of "one flesh". Because there are two individuals with differing backgrounds, different upbringing, and different perspectives we are now obligated to God with "becoming" one flesh. How do we become "one flesh"? Let's define "one flesh". It literally means one body. God's will is that a marriage of man and wife become one flesh. Functioning and moving together as one entity. God's word gives us ample scripture to accomplish becoming one flesh. It's important to note that each person in a marriage is responsible for their walk as individuals. It is not incumbent on one or the other to be responsible for one another's walk. We can bring up or suggest, to our spouses, possible contradictions to scripture when we observe them, but it has to be done with the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation. If the suggestion is taken to heart and a genuine change occurs, it should be celebrated as the continuing process of becoming one flesh. If, however, the suggestion is ignored, it can become a stumbling block or stone of offence. The best case scenario is to live **I Corinthians 13:1-8** in a marriage. The love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation:

- Suffers long

- Is kind
- Envies not
- Vaunts not itself
- Is not puffed up
- Does not behave itself unseemly
- Seeks not her own
- Is not easily provoked
- Thinks no evil
- Rejoices NOT in iniguity
- Rejoices in the truth
- Bears all things
- Believes all things (according to scripture)
- Hopes all things (according to scripture)
- Endures all things
- Never fails

The sixteen attributes of the love of God gives us a very clear standard to live by. These attributes are not all given to us simply when we become born again. Yes, we can all have some of these attributes we have learned in life, but we must work at making all of them a part of who we are in Christ Jesus. We all have an old man nature that in some cases can be at cross purposes with God's will for our lives. We as individuals must strive to achieve these attributes to the point of being part of our makeup, our behavior towards our fellow man. In the context of a marriage relationship, these attributes are a vital part of becoming one flesh.

Going back to the record in Genesis 2:18 when God created woman for Adam to be a help, meet for him.

God knew that Adam would need a companion. In verse 18 God says, "it is not good that the man should be alone. I will make him an help, meet for him."

*I will refer to some excerpts from an article written by **Kat Armas** (July 25 2018) the title is: **What Does's "Helper" Really Mean?**

For starters, the word help or helper implies something very different in Hebrew than it does in English. In English, helper most of the time suggests someone who is under a person in authority, like an assistant, for example. However, this is very different from the Hebrew, as help in this particular context come from one who has power to give help, it refers to someone in

a superior position offering help to a weaker person who cannot help herself or himself.

A quote from Matt Chandler: “God being called helper throughout the scriptures brings honor to the position of helper. Since God has been called the helper, a helper cannot be inherently inferior. So, if woman has been made a helper fit for him, a woman as helper to the man cannot mean the woman is inferior in any way.”

Chandler is right. *Ezer* (Hebrew for help) can be found 20 times in the Old Testament. Seventeen of those times it is used to describe God, and the other three times to describe a military aide. When it refers to God, it is always in accordance with his engagement with humans and his relationship with Israel.

Exodus 18:4, Deuteronomy 33:7, Psalm 33:20 are a few references.

The second part of the phrase is also important to note: *kenegno* This word is made up of two prepositions: *ke* which suggests “corresponding to” or “the adding of something that is essential”, and *negdo* which suggests “to stand in someone’s presence.” The two prepositions together express a relationship between two people facing each other, showing they are equals. *ezer kenegdo* in no way suggests subordination or inferiority-not in creation nor in function.

Thus in Genesis 2:18 “I will make him a helper fit (*ezer kenegdo*) for him”, implies someone, a helper, who is suitable for the task, not a maid or an assistant, but a companion that corresponds to Adam. As David Freedman puts it, “When God creates Eve from Adam’s rib, his intent is that she will be (unlike the animals) a power or strength equal to him.”

*That is the end of references used from the article, What Does “Helper” Really Mean?

We can also ask ourselves a few questions: Has God ever made a mistake? Has God ever made anything imperfect? Was Eve the perfect compliment to Adam?

Eve was indeed the absolute perfect compliment to Adam. God would do no less than that. We also know that, like Adam, Eve would also have freedom of will. The freedom to choose the way to go. One thing we can keep in mind is that God instructed Adam about not eating from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Eve was not yet created for Adam. So,

axiomatically we can deduce that Adam would have had to instruct Eve on this instruction from God not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. How did Adam go about informing Eve of this commandment from God? Very simply, we do not know, it was not recorded in God's word.

We can formulate different ways Adam would accomplish this task, but we can only guess. We could ask ourselves, Was Adam taken by this new companion God created just for him? Did Adam respond emotionally to this new beautiful creation God made specifically for him? Adam was a human being and God gave us five senses to enhance our lives here on Earth. We can only imagine the **sight** that Adam beheld. We can only imagine the **sound** Adam heard from this new creation. We can only imagine Adam's response when **he felt** her skin for the first time. We can only imagine the first time he **smelled** her presence. We can only imagine the first time he **tasted** her kiss. Do you think that Adam was completely enthralled and captivated by Eve? Or do you think Adam would have just looked at her and said, "Hey, can you give me a hand here" to take care of this place?"

At times I think we can get complacent and take each other for granted. That's when we need to get our heads into God's word and continue to renew our minds to get back on track of reaching the goal of "one flesh". Again, it is still an individual responsibility to keep our walk with our Heavenly Father, in line with the scriptures. It is not the duty of the husband or wife to nag, belittle or criticize the other. It is not honest if the husband or wife blames the other for indiscretions, wrong decisions or bad behavior. I remember a teaching that had things to avoid in relationships that included, do not criticize, condemn or complain. Those three things can expose many areas where one or the other is not walking in love.

We can ask ourselves how would we respond to criticism, condemnation and complaints? Would any of those instill confidence or trust? We remember in **Ephesians 4:29** Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

So ask yourself: Is criticism edifying? Is condemnation edifying? Is complaining edifying? The obvious answer is an emphatic NO! We do not need a long dissertation or discussion on the merits of criticizing, condemning or complaining. If it does not edify the hearer, don't say it! Criticizing, condemning or complaining is in the category of emotional

reactions. Edifying another is a response of the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation. As human beings we can react with emotion or respond with love. Reaction is after the fact, response is prior to the act. In other words, reaction is after something has happened. Responding is acting out of a pure heart with God’s love already present in us.

We can look at how we interact with others especially when we are engaged in conversations. What are your thoughts while another is talking to you? Are you excitedly waiting for an opening to talk? Are you formulating several points to bring up while they are speaking? If you truly want to become a great conversationalist, you must abandon all the thoughts you can conjure up while the other person is speaking and simply listen intently to what they are saying. Focus your attention on what they are saying to the point of being able to repeat it back to them. Believe me, you won’t have time to come up with other thoughts to come back with. I learned a long time ago that the best method is to simply stop talking and just listen. Look at conversations as a way to learn more about the person you are talking to. Listening is far more important than attempting to get your view into the conversation, it then becomes a discussion rather than a conversation. After the other person has obviously stopped their speaking, you can respond with, “So, if I hear you correctly… start by repeating what they just said. You can interject phrases like, “that’s fascinating, tell me more?”, or, “I did not know that about you, can you expound on that?” The idea is to get the other person to continue talking about themselves and you get the benefit of learning more about them. I have experienced many conversations where the other person has made the comment that, “you are great to talk to”, “It was a pleasure speaking with you” “thank you for listening to me”. While working at the Wood County Engineer’s Office from 1979-1989 I was part of the Ditch Maintenance Department. This department was responsible for keeping the drainage waterways maintained. To pay for this maintenance, property owners would have an assessment added to their real estate taxes. This assessment appeared on their tax statement, but did not include a lengthy description or explanation of the assessment. My job was to explain this assessment whenever a property owner came to the Engineer’s Office wondering what the assessment was for and why it affected their property. Needless to say, the vast majority of property owners were quite irate upon

coming into the Engineer's Office. Demanding to know what the heck this assessment was for! After initial introductions, I would simply ask, "how can I help you?". I maintained a very calm demeanor and did not try to come back at them or interrupt them in any way. This generally led into an emotional tirade that sometimes continued for a while. The point is this: After saying can I help you, I simply shut up and let them speak with no interruptions and listened to their concerns. Once they finished with their thoughts, I would speak and let them know that first of all, I understood their frustrations and that I would do my best to explain this assessment to their satisfaction. I started by explaining where they were in proximity to the drainage ditch and how their property drained into that ditch by using a drainage plat with the drainage area outlined. Once the assessment was explained and all their questions were answered the property owners walked away with a new understanding and were grateful that someone took the time to explain it to them. They all thanked me before they left the office. It was a simple matter of allowing them to "get if off their chests", so to speak without interruption. It means listening with the intent to learn something or active listening. We can apply this same principle to our marriage relationships, by actively listening to our spouse to learn something and not interrupt them when they are speaking. Focus on what the other is saying without formulating a retort in your mind. The husband and wife must both equally apply this principle to each other to achieve that one flesh mindset.

We must also remember that in **Ephesians 6:12** God instructs us that we are not each other's enemy. **Ephesians 6:12** For we wrestle **not against flesh and blood**, but against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Flesh and blood is other human beings. So, our fight isn't with other human beings or with each other, but it is a spiritual contest waged against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Is our spouse in the category of spiritual wickedness in high places? NO! So why are you wrestling with them? If you find yourself, accusing, blaming and pointing fingers at your spouse, God says you are wrestling against flesh and blood. God clearly states that we **wrestle not** against flesh and blood in **Ephesians 6:12!** Why the heck are you even going there? It is a trick of the adversary to get you off the word and thinking evil of your spouse. Remember those 16 attributes of **I Corinthians 13:1-8?** If you see your spouse in any other light other than what is expressed in those 16

attributes, you have got to change your thinking, you have got to renew your mind to God's word in that category. So, you say to yourself, "well I am doing the word here, but my spouse isn't"! That attitude says, "I have attained a perfectly renewed mind, but my spouse hasn't". It is not available in this day and time to have a perfectly renewed mind. So, what do we do? We must always look to ourselves first and recognize where our thinking has gone off the rails to get to that point in our thinking. Have we responded to our spouse with the love of God in the renewed mind in manifestation? Have we exhausted all avenues of God's word in the situation? God's word is always the solution, always! We have absolutely no control over whether our spouse responds to God's word or not. We are still each in our own walks, responsible to God to renew our minds. If you choose to believe God's word and put it on in your hearts and minds, the deliverance will follow absolutely. It does not work if only one of the two puts on God's word. It takes both doing it to achieve the one flesh objective.

Ephesians 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear (respect) of God. We are to be subject to each other equally. The husband does not rule over the wife, but accepts her input and respects her voice in matters pertaining to the family.

The husband does not make decisions hastily or solely by himself, but takes in and thinks over the information and input from his wife. If a mutual decision cannot be accomplished, it is the responsibility of the husband to make a decision. The wife will garner the benefits of allowing the husband to make that decision, good, bad, or indifferent. The wife will not suffer any consequences for allowing her husband to make a decision, even if it is the wrong decision. That is why it is vitally important to allow the wife to give her input and respect her voice in matters by listening to her and accepting that her perspective may be different than the husband's perspective. The end goal is to have a Godly outcome. God has placed the husband as the head of the marriage. Because the husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church, it can be a challenge for the husband to maintain this headship position. It can be easy for the husband to simply "go along"(emotional response) with the wife because of his deep and profound love for his wife. We can see the first occurrence of this scenario with the union of Adam and Eve. We can easily see how Adam would have been completely enthralled with Eve. Eve is the one that accepted Satan's narrative and Adam went along with it. In our day and time, nothing has

changed. Husbands can still be challenged with “going along with” their wives in certain situations because of the love they have for their wives. If this attitude goes unchecked, the husband will eventually relinquish his headship and the wife will step right into this position with relative ease. The husband has allowed his emotions to overrule his logical duty to be the head of the wife. God’s plan for marriage has always been the husband is in position as the head. If the wife is allowed to assume the headship position it can lead to an eventual schism in the relationship, if the course is not corrected. Yes, husbands and wives can and should agree on their proper arrangement within the marriage through deliberate decisions, but the husband needs to remain the head in the marriage. The husband has the responsibility to God to oversee every aspect of the marriage to keep everything running according to God’s word. The wife is responsible for seeing her husband as the head by letting God’s word be the standard in the relationship. The one flesh objective can only be achieved by both individuals renewing their minds according to God’s word on the subject of the one flesh.

It is a mutual agreement and commitment that can produce a powerful and dynamic relationship that brings glory to our Heavenly Father.